

# EXPLORE!



## Madeira Island Discovery

MADEIRA, PORTUGAL - TRIP CODE MDR  
DISCOVERY

### Why book this trip?

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Explore Madeira's best known sights and learn why it's known as 'the pearl of the Atlantic' with its dramatic mountainous scenery criss-crossed by levadas and colourful flora. This highlights trip is based in the coastal city of Funchal and has a mix of full and free days.

- **Calheta** - Discover the history of Madeira's rum industry and sip a potent glass of the local tippie, poncha
- **Levada walk** - See the rugged landscapes on an easy walk along a small part of Madeira's vast levada network
- **Afternoon tea** - Take in the ocean views, as Churchill once did, at Madeira's colonial Reid's Palace Hotel



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 7  
Lunch: 2



**TRIP STAFF**  
Explore Tour  
Leader  
Driver(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus  
Boat



**ACCOMMODATION**  
7 nights  
comfortable hotel



**TRIP PACE:**  
Moderate



**GROUP SIZE:**  
12 - 18

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join trip in Funchal

Arrive Funchal and check-in to the hotel that will be our base for the next seven nights from which we will explore Madeira's highlights. Funchal takes its name from 'funcho', meaning fennel and according to local legend, when Zarco landed here in 1419, he named this spot after the abundance of the herb he found. Visiting sailors used to call the city 'little Lisbon' because of the grandeur of its cathedral and the buildings that line its harbour that reminded them of those in Lisbon.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**



**SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE**



**MEALS PROVIDED: NONE**

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## DAY 2 - Tour of the north of the island and easy levada walk

Today we leave Funchal on a full day tour of the north and north-west of the island including Camara de Lobos, where we see a plaque dedicated to Sir Winston Churchill who used to holiday on the island and would sit at this spot to paint the beautiful coastline scene. We continue to Pico da Torre viewpoint, which offers stunning views of the traditional buildings in Camara de Lobos lining the bay. The 360 degree panoramic views stretch back as far as Funchal. Our next stop is Cabo Girao, which is second highest cliff face in the world and offers yet more captivating sea views. We continue through Ribeira Brava and into the mountains to Encumeada. From here there's the chance to take an easy 3 kilometre walk along Levada Folhadal. Madeira's levadas are a unique series of mini-canals used for irrigation. There are a number of great walking trails on the island that follow these channels. After our walk we journey down through the forested area of Chao dos Louros to the pretty town of Sao Vicente on the north coast. We'll stop to see Pousada dos Vinhaticos, a heritage hotel, which is the last remaining pousada on the island. On our way back to Funchal for the evening we'll stop in Porto Moniz where there are natural pools and we'll have the chance for a refreshing swim, which is the perfect way to relax after a day spent exploring.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 3 - Walking tour of Funchal and afternoon tea at Reid's Hotel

This morning we go on a walking tour of the island's capital Funchal. We'll see Mercado dos Lavradores - a fascinating fruit market where every fruit and vegetable imaginable offers a huge array of colours and sweet smells. Another market well worth seeing is the fish market where the fresh catches of day will be on sale.

Next we head for Bortal Embroidery Factory, which produces some of the finest traditional embroidery and tapestries to be found on the island. After time to look around we continue into the historic centre of Funchal's Old Town, where you can find a large selection of restaurants and bars and also a permanent outdoor art gallery displaying over 200 works of art by guest artists that are painted onto the doors of Rua de Santa Maria. We'll also have the opportunity to admire the colonial architecture outside Santiago

Fort, the Regional Government Palace and the fort and palace of Sao Lourenco.

We'll visit the Municipal Theater and Jardim Municipal - the large garden here is sure to enchant you with its collection of alluring exotic flowers, both endemic and from around the world, and its native ancient trees.

After a morning of exploration we have time to relax and soak up the history at Reid's Hotel, where Churchill used to stay in 1950's, and where we'll partake in afternoon tea before returning to our hotel in the late afternoon. For the afternoon tea please wear smart casual clothing and avoid wearing shorts or sportswear, such as trainers.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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#### **DAY 4 - Visit to a 16th century sugar mill, Ethnographic Museum and wine tasting at Blandy's**

This morning en route to Ribeira Brava we will visit the Ethnographic Museum. The museum holds a collection of objects relating to Madeira's culture and traditions such as wine, fishing, transport and much more.

After time to explore the museum we drive on to Calheta to visit one of the last working sugar mills on the island dating back to the 16th century. We'll learn of the 'white gold' and rum making history of the area and have a tasting of the popular local drink 'Poncha', which is made from lemons, honey and rum and also sample honey cake. If you're lucky enough to be here between April and mid-May then we should be able to see the mill working, as it'll be sugar harvesting season and production will be in full swing.

Next we'll head for Prazeres, which is small parish not far from Calheta. Here there is the opportunity to take an easy barefoot walk along an 800 metre path, which is made up of 17 different items sourced from the island including pine, eucalyptus berry, laurel, beach pebbles, black and yellow sand, gravel and mud. It's designed to provide natural reflexology for your feet and offers a completely different sensory experience.

Before returning to Funchal we'll make a stop in Jardim do Mar, a beautiful spot between the sea and the mountains. This small parish preserves the calm of days gone by with its narrow streets and low level

houses with beautiful gardens. You'll have free time here for lunch.

This afternoon we head for Blandy's Wine Lodge where we enjoy a premium tour and tasting. The tour will explain the full wine making process from the making of the barrels through to the production and storage of the finished product. Followed by a tasting of, what is arguably the island's most famous export, Madeira wine.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### DAY 5 - Free day to explore or the option to visit Porto Santo by ferry

Today has been left free for you to further explore Funchal or there'll be the chance to go on a full day excursion to the island of Porto Santo by ferry. The journey takes approximately two and half hours each way. Porto Santo is a popular beach destination with the locals and with its 9 kilometre unspoilt white sand beach stretching all the way from Vila Baleira to Ponta de Calheta it's easy to understand why. Whilst on the island you may also choose to visit the Columbus House Museum, which is the former home of the legendary explorer Christopher Columbus.

If you'd prefer to stay closer to Funchal then there are some great swimming opportunities nearby including the Lido Bathing Complex, Ponta Gorda Complex, Formosa Beach and Barreirinha Beach, which are all easily reachable by public bus.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 6 - Boat trip to the Desertas Islands, whales and dolphins search

Today we'll travel by boat out to the Desertas Islands and we'll hopefully get to see dolphins and whales along the way. Our boat will be 'Bonita da Madeira', a 23 metre long wooden sailing boat. The Desertas Islands are a group of 3 uninhabited islands, which lie around 25 kilometres off the coast of Madeira. They have been dedicated as a Natural Reserve to protect the rare species of monk seal, *monachus monachus*, which favours them. Our boat will anchor along Deserta's Bay where you'll have time to swim in the clear waters and relax in the secluded bay. Lunch will be served on board and then we will have time to visit the island. The transfer to the shore will be made on a rubber dinghy boat. After the visit we begin our journey back to the mainland.

Please note that in the event of poor weather it may be necessary to cancel this boat trip or change the day of operation. If the boat trip isn't possible to do during your stay then we'll enjoy an excursion to Pico do Arieiro and Santana on the east of the island instead. Also if there are monk seals in the bay then we won't be able to swim there, as they are a protected species.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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## DAY 7 - Free day with the chance to walk to Caldeirao Verde Waterfall



Today is free for you to do as much or little as you may like. For those who want something more active then there's the chance to walk to Caldeirao Verde Waterfall. Starting at the Queimadas Guesthouse and walking along the Levada of Caldeirao Verde, we make our way westwards through an emerald green paradise. Soon after the start we see the most spectacular views of the villages far below. Walking further then a waterfall comes into view and soon after passing it, we go through some short tunnels and after a while we arrive at Caldeirao Verde majestic waterfall. Following a short rest, during which we have our picnic, we begin the return journey. This is a highly recommended walk to some of the most remote and beautiful parts of the island.

Difficulty grade: moderate walk, walking time: 5-6 hours and distance: 13 km

If you're looking to take things at a more relaxed pace then you may wish to take the cable car to Monte or to the Monte Botanical Gardens. The cable car to Monte takes approximately 15 minutes and then to the gardens it's a further nine minutes each way. The gardens have been open since the 1960's and are one of Madeira's best known tourist attractions. The huge gardens display over 2500 exotic plants that provide an exuberance of colour and scents. You may decide to return from Monte to Livramento in Funchal (around 15 minutes walk from our hotel) by a ride on a traditional wicker toboggan. The downhill journey takes about 10 minutes along a 2km long road course. The toboggan will be steered by two operators and can reach up to 48kms per hour.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel do Carmo (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## **DAY 8 - Trip ends in Funchal**

The trip ends at our hotel in Funchal after breakfast.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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# Trip information

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## Country information

### Madeira

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### Portugal

#### Climate

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a trip to Portugal - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The northern high plains has both extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. The islands have very different weather patterns due to their positioning and can have sudden rain falls throughout the year so waterproofs are recommended even in the summer.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
0	2 Pin Round	Roman Catholic	Portuguese

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## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

#### Porto Santo:

A day on the Golden Island (including transfers, ferry to the island and one hour island tour) - €115.00 per person, Casa Museu Cristovão Colombo - €2.00 per person.

#### Island tours:

Eastern Island Tour Pico do Areeiroantana (full day) - €36.00 per person, plus lunch for €13.00 per person.

Jeep Tour (full day) - €45 per person, plus lunch for €13 per person.

Walk from Queimadas to Caldeirao Verde Santana (including transfers and guide) - €37.00 per person.

Quinta Palheiro Garden and easy levada walk (half day) - €65.00 per person (minimum four people).

Nun's Valley Tour (half day) - €28.00 per person.

Monte Botanical Gardens trip (half day) - €28.00 per person.

#### In Funchal:



Cable Car Funchal to Monte - €11.00 per person one way or €16.00 return per person.

Tobogganing - €25.00 (one person), €30.00 (two people), €45.00 (three people, which is the maximum per toboggan).

Lido Bathing Complex (which has a salted pool and access to the sea) is 10 minutes from Funchal centre by bus - entrance is €5.00 per person.

Ponta Gorda Complex (which has a salted pool and access to the sea) is 10 minutes from Funchal centre by bus - entrance is €5.00 per person.

Formosa Beach (a sand and pebble beach) is 15 minutes from Funchal centre by bus and access is free.

Barreirinha Beach is 15 minutes walk from our hotel and entrance is €2.00 per person.

Public buses are about €1.95 per way. the fare is paid on the bus or you can buy prepaid tickets for €3.20 for two trips.

## **Clothing**

July and August are the warmest months, though the islands are freshened by cooling sea breezes.

Waterproofs are essential at any time of the year, as are gloves, a hat and a warm jacket, jumper or fleece for higher altitudes and evenings. We also recommend taking a swimsuit.

## **Footwear**

Comfortable walking shoes and trainers or sandals for relaxing. Plastic sandals are useful if swimming off lava rocks.

## **Luggage**

20kg

### **Luggage: On tour**

One main piece of baggage and a day pack for personal items. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage - so don't overload yourself.

## **Equipment**

We recommend taking a waterbottle, sunhat, sunscreen, sunglasses, torch and towel for swimming.

During the included boat trip to the Desertas Islands sometimes there can be some wave motion onboard, so if you suffer with sea sickness then please consider bringing anti-sickness medication with you.

## **Tipping**

### **Explore leader**

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### **Local crew**

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

Accordingly please allow £15.00 for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is

the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

## Madeira

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

### Foreign Exchange

## Portugal

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

#### Dinner price

£18

#### Beer price

£2.00 - 3.00 depending on your location, well touristed areas are usually slightly more expensive.

#### Water price

£1.4

### Foreign Exchange

#### Local currency      Recommended Currency For Exchange

Euro.                      Take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

#### Where To Exchange

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

#### ATM Availability

Cash-point machines are available in all major towns. Bankcards with the Cirrus logo are accepted.

#### Credit Card Acceptance

Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

### **Travellers Cheques**

Travellers cheques can be exchanged in all major towns but are not recommended due to the high rate of commission.

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## **Transport, Accommodation & Meals**

### **Transport Information**

Bus, Boat

### **Accommodation notes**

On this centre based holiday our hotel is central located within Funchal city centre and is around 10 minutes' walk from the beach and 5 minutes from the Old Town. It's a recently renovated 4 star hotel. Facilities include a bar, rooftop outdoor swimming pool, restaurant and a laundry service (additional charges apply). Bedrooms have modern decor in neutral colours and each has cable television, mini bar, telephone, hairdryer, Wi-Fi (additional charges apply) and a safety deposit box (additional charges apply). All rooms are en suite and most have a shower over bath. Bedrooms do not have air-conditioning.

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## **Essential Information**

### **FCO Advice**

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### **Price Guarantee**

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### **Visa and Passport Information**

Portugal: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's

recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will

exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## **Flight information**

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

### **Flight Information**

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### **Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## **Ability to swim**

No

## **Madeira**

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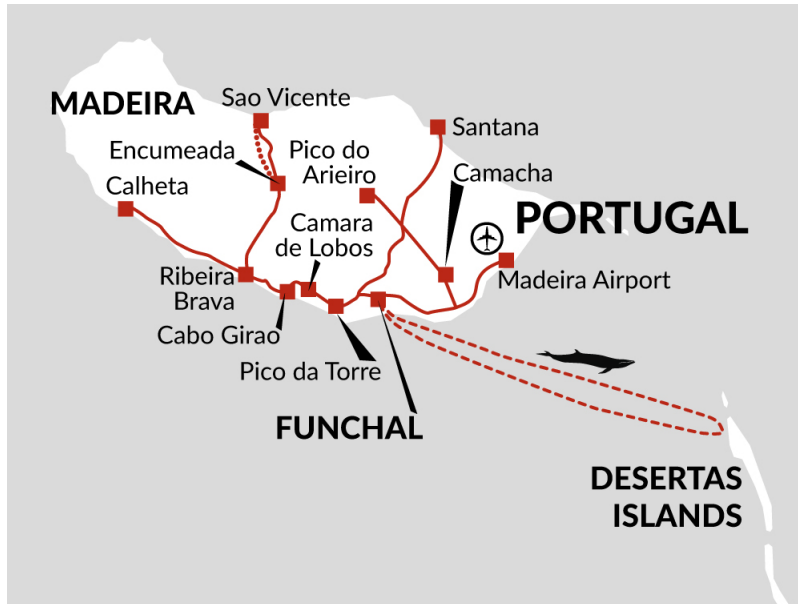
## **Portugal**

### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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## **Additional Information**



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## Reviews



AWARD WINNING  
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE  
PROMISE



AIRPORT  
TRANSFERS